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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

23 December 1950

SUBJECT: NIC-9: TURKEY - Suggested Terms of Reference

Problem - To estimate Turkey's position in East-West power relationships and in the implications thereof.

Method - The purpose of this study is to define and analyze the effects of Turkey's pro-Western alignment and to estimate the likelihood of Turkey's continuing this alignment both under present conditions and in the event of war. The effective development of this concept will provide for the policy-maker or planner a means of assessing the importance of Turkey in East-West power relationships and consequently of determining what commitments if any should be made to Turkey.

In blocking out the project, an effort has been made to avoid considering the subject in the old, cliché-ridden terms of the strategic significance of Turkey. The aim has been to suggest a series of specific, closely related discussions which will illustrate why Turkey's friendship is important to the US in the context both of the present world situation and of certain possible developments in the future. The framework suggested below should not be taken as a rigid, definitive outline; it merely lays out the ground to be covered and suggests a convenient sequence.

Subject Matter and General ArrangementI. Turkey's Foreign Policy Orientation

A. A brief discussion of Turkey's current policy toward the USSR and its Satellites on one hand and the Western powers on the other. The discussion should be concerned primarily with Turkey's fear and mistrust of the USSR and its resistance to Soviet pressure, and its strong pro-US sentiments and dependence on US aid. Mention should be made, however, of Turkey's treaty ties with the UK and France. Mention should also be made of Turkey's position with respect to NATO and of Turkey's desire to participate in some sort of security arrangement (perhaps regional) with US backing.

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B. The reasons for Turkey's pro-Western alignment. This should be an analytical presentation of the ideological, strategic, economic, and political factors involved in Turkey's position in the East-West struggle. These various factors should be weighed with the idea of determining how solid the Turkish position is. For instance, is there anything in the theory that the Turks are by nature and religion antipathetic to Communism, or is the government's strict security policy the more important consideration in Turkey's "anti-Communism"? What is the relation between Turkey's geographical position and its pro-US alignment? What is the significance of the Straits in this context? What ideological ties, if any, has modern Turkey with the US? What part do the US aid programs play in Turkey's foreign policy orientation?

II. Strengths and Weaknesses of Turkey's Position

This discussion would involve a consideration of the various political, economic, sociological and military factors which make Turkey a tough nut for the USSR to

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crack. Such factors as geography and the difficulty of assimilating the civil population, as well as Turkey's military capabilities should be considered. An attempt would be made to evaluate the significance of Turkey's military strength in promoting Turkey's security against Soviet and/or Satellite attack.

The weaknesses of Turkey's position should also be considered: its relatively isolated geographical location; the necessity of maintaining costly armed forces and the strain on the economy; the resultant role of US aid.

III. Possibilities of a Shift in Turkey's Pro-US Alignment

Although this section might appear to be somewhat academic, it should explore the possible future contingencies in a constantly changing world situation which might bring about a shift in Turkey's present strong pro-US alignment and its attitude of adamant opposition to the USSR. Among the factors to be considered might be a substantial reduction in US aid as part of a global contraction of US commitments; the impact of local Soviet/Satellite victories elsewhere in the Balkan-Middle East area (Iran, Greece, Yugoslavia) which might place Turkey in an even more exposed position; the impact of larger Western reverses in the cold war which might call into question Western ability to support Turkey; and the economic strains of constant semi-mobilization which might lead to an enforced reduction of Turkish military strength.

IV. Strategic Importance of Turkey's Alignment

This section should examine both the positive advantages to the US of Turkey's present pro-US alignment and the disadvantages which would flow from a shift therein.

A. Deterrent effect on Soviet/Satellite expansionism. This discussion would try to define what effect, if any, Turkey's military strength has on Soviet/Satellite aspirations in the Balkan-Middle East area.

B. Turkey's role with respect to specific US strategic interests. An exploration of the strategic importance to the US of Turkish control of the Straits, of the extent to which a strong Turkey affords protection to Middle Eastern oil, and of the Turkish attitude toward granting bases to the US. This section should also examine the effect on US strategic interests if the Turks should abandon their present pro-US alignment and perhaps seek an accommodation with the USSR.

C. Psychological impact of Turkey's alignment on other Balkan-Middle Eastern countries. What effect does Turkey's present resistance to Soviet pressure have on Greece, Yugoslavia, Iran, etc. and, conversely, what would be the effect of a shift in Turkey's alignment?

V. Probable Turkish Courses of Action in the Event of War and the Implications Thereof

A. Turkish reaction to Soviet or Satellite assault on Turkey. This discussion should cover several contingencies: isolated action against Turkey as a whole; isolated action against the Straits area only; action against Turkey as part of a general war.

B. Turkish reaction to isolated Soviet or Satellite action against a nearby country (e.g., Greece, Yugoslavia, or Iran) and against a distant target (e.g., Southeast Asia). The discussion should assume that the isolated action would not lead (at least immediately) to general war.

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C. Turkish reaction to war between the US and China. What position would the Turks take if the Korean situation developed into full-scale war between the US and China? What course would the Turks follow if the UN forces, driven out of Korea, limited their campaign against China to blockade and aerial bombardment?

D. Turkey's role in a general war in which Turkey itself was not initially attacked. The determination and increasing military strength of the Turks make it clear that the conquest of Turkey would be a costly operation for the invaders. It appears possible that Turkey might be by-passed by Soviet forces in the event of general war. Under such circumstances, to what extent would Turkey heed the desires of the Western powers? Would it attempt to remain neutral indefinitely?

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